

SENATE RESOLUTION 182

By Norris

A RESOLUTION recognizing Civitan International on its celebration of "Clergy Appreciation Week," January 31 through February 6, 2010.

WHEREAS, on February 3, 1943, four chaplains aboard the sinking troopship *USS Dorchester* gave their lives so others might live; and

WHEREAS, on that fateful day, a German torpedo assaulted the *Dorchester* as it pushed through the treacherous waters of the North Atlantic with 905 American servicemen aboard; and

WHEREAS, many on board died instantly and many more were trapped below deck, even as overcrowded lifeboats capsized and rafts drifted away; and

WHEREAS, on deck, amid confusion and terror, Army Chaplains George L. Fox, Alexander D. Goode, Clark V. Poling, and John P. Washington moved about calming frightened men, directing bewildered soldiers to lifeboats, and distributing life jackets with calm precision; and

WHEREAS, George L. Fox, the oldest of the chaplains, served in the Marines during World War I, during which he won the Silver Star and the French *Croix de Guerre*, and became a Protestant minister after having a successful career as a public accountant; he dutifully re-enlisted when World War II began; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Alexander D. Goode had been too young for World War I; before giving his life in World War II, he evinced his profound patriotism by walking thirty miles to and from Arlington Cemetery in order to view the burial of the Unknown Soldier; and

WHEREAS, Clark V. Poling, the youngest of the chaplains, was the seventh generation of his family in an unbroken line of Dutch Reformed (Presbyterian) Church ministers; his only desire, as expressed to his father, was to do his duty serving in the war; and

WHEREAS, Father John P. Washington received his appointment as a chaplain shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor; he was known for his laughter and was said to have kept a joyful and comforting disposition even as the *Dorchester* was sinking; and

WHEREAS, witnessed by many of their fellow soldiers, these four men of divergent religious backgrounds gave up their life vests on the *Dorchester* so that others could be saved; they spent their last few moments of life with linked arms, praying to God; and

WHEREAS, inspired by this extraordinary moment of ultimate self-sacrifice, Civitan clubs have taken the initiative to set aside a special time to recognize and honor these and modern-day clergy of all faiths; and

WHEREAS, ministers, priests, and rabbis have dedicated their lives to service, and through "Clergy Appreciation Week," which is annually observed during the week of February 3, the members of Civitan International aim to promote world brotherhood and religious understanding among all people, regardless of religious persuasion; and

WHEREAS, many citizens benefit from the presence and work of clergy in the community and it is fitting that we pause to recognize this occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we join with the members of Civitan International in observance of "Clergy Appreciation Week," January 31 through February 6, 2010, and encourage the good people of the State of Tennessee to show their appreciation and support for the clergy whose efforts make their communities a better place in which to live.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.